

NOVELTY AND VARIETY IN INTERESTING WINTER FASHIONS

Still Opportunity for Freakishness in Dress—Some Praiseworthy Effects of the Tommy Atkins Fad—Dance Frocks in Velvet and Net

By ELEANOR HOYT BRAINER.

THE social season is on, and though there is an undercurrent of thoughtfulness in the gaiety and even the debutantes are dancing for charity as well as for amusement New York begins to take on its usual winter air. Winter has proved overjoy this year, but furs and winter toiles have consulted the calendar rather than the temperature, and where smart folk congregate one now can study the season's modes at their best. On the whole the fashion show is more interesting than it has been in recent seasons. There is more radical novelty in it, and more variety as well. What is more, the innovations are in the main attractive. Freak frocks, freak hats, freak furs, freak coiffures there are of course. So long as feminine nature is what it is there will be freakishness in dress, but when the prevalent modes of a season are fairly rational and conservative and generally becoming there is occasion for thanksgiving.

That appears to be the state of things at the moment. Colors, lines, details, broadly speaking, are admirable. In the afternoon crowd on Fifth avenue, which so far as the promenaders are concerned is fairly representative of the two extremes but of the great crowd that spends a considerable amount of money, more or less discriminately, on dress, one sees a larger percentage of well dressed women and girls than one did last year. The silhouette is better for the average figure than the happily defunct bunched up drapery effects and the exaggeratedly tight walking skirts.

The coats buttoning up high on the chest are generally becoming, as is the collar high at the back, though the all around high collar is not for every one. The less blousing, trimmed lines are a relief, as is the long set in sleeve, and both among toques and trimmed hats there is a rather unusual percentage of models combining smartness with simplicity.

Add to all this the fact that materials are attractive and that colorings for street are chiefly dark and rich or softly neutral, as in the case of the ubiquitous sand color and putty tones, and you have a state of things to offset some fashion caricature.

The exaggeratedly short skirt, the overemphasized skirt flare, the accentuated compactness of Tommy Atkins toques, the extremes in the swing back, to high neck dressing, the conspicuous possibilities in the light topped boots and the snaring meshes of the floating veils are fashion features that bid for caricature and get it. In the avenue crowd on a recent sunny afternoon there was a young woman who left a perceptible thrill of excitement behind her.

She was rather good looking, so far as her face was concerned, and oddly enough, in a refined rather than a flamboyant way. She did not look vulgar. She did not look fast, but she was fearfully and wonderfully dressed.

The figure was narrow rather than slender, and her brown broadcloth coat, buttoned to the throat, straight but snug to the hip line, made with narrow shoulders and long, tight, set in sleeves, emphasized the narrowness to an extraordinary degree. At the hip or low waist line this coat took on a very ambitious flare and swirled out wildly at the knees over a tight underskirt that reached only to the ankles, where it met rather loose of patent leather with pale fawn tops and black laces.

A tight high collar with a deep pleated ruche standing up at the back encircled her neck. Her hair was close coiffed and topped by a sand color toque of the Tommy Atkins type trimmed in a brown fur pompon and a brown silk band with short fluttering ends at the back. Over the hat was a loose falling brown veil bordered in a fold of satin. She wore eyeglasses with a wide ribbon band and carried a barrel muff of handsome skunk fur.

They were all there—the season's fashion innovations—each a little exaggerated, each chosen with utter disregard of the wearer's individuality, ruthlessly combined without heed to harmony. The result made the stoutest advocate of the new modes hold his breath, and though there was not even a gleam of brilliant or daring color in the costume it screamed aloud.

Yes, the new fashions offer material for caricature, but rightly worn even the most striking of them have charm and conservative women can find something to suit them without great effort.

The two velvet models of the large

picture are not for these conservative women. They are of the extreme group, and yet it would be a grim critic who would deny them charm, and the long tunic model in sober coloring would be becoming to many a woman who would not have the courage or understanding to wear it.

This frock, in the original, was of black velvet with embroidery in black and dull shades of gold and with trimming of black fox, but the same design was delightfully worn at a musicale last week and was built up in seal brown and dull gold, with dark brown fur of the marten class.

The original of the coat costume was far more audacious. Red velvet was the coat material—a delectable red with a fruitily bloom that robbed it of all crudity. Corded and tassels were of red silk. The fur was black and the straight full skirt was of soft heavy black satin. A velvet rose, in the color of the coat velvet but shading to lighter tones, nestled in the dark fur at the collar line.

It did vaguely remind one of the Russian ballet, but it was lovely. Every woman who saw it admitted that.

Another model brought over by the same importer who showed this red and black costume was much more sober and demure, yet suggested the other in line; perhaps one might better say it echoed the other, and the echo was a faint one. There was the coat, trimmed in the same way with fur, but the sleeve was set into an armhole and the body of the coat was not so full, nor was the coat skirt nearly so full or flaring. A loose scarf girdle passing under the fur in front and knotting once in the back, with short ends, replaced the cord and tassels.

The material was an uncut velvet, whose foundation was softly plaided in many colors, though the very deep green pile so hid and softened this foundation that in some lights the velvet looked plain green, while in others a slight shifting color only hinted at the plaid. There was no trimming save the fur, and both coat and skirt were of the velvet.

Of beautiful velvets there is apparently no end, and in spite of prophecies regarding short supply the merchants are constantly bringing out new things in striped velvet, velvet brocade, uncut velvet, plaid velvet, shaded velvet, &c. Now is the time, however, when short lengths and remnants of the costly stuffs find their way to the bargain counters, and the canny woman who watches for her chance can pick up the velvet she wants for half its earlier price. A well known dressmaker encountered at a remnant sale the other day confessed that she had spent the afternoon in a velvet raid.

"The prices of the handsomest stuffs are cruel," she said laughingly, "but in this day of combinations short lengths go a long way, and I've turned a very clever trick to-day. I've had a big call for velvet dance frocks along with everything else in velvet, and yet even my wealthy customers don't want to spend extravagant amounts on dance frocks. I'm fixed for them now. With lace or chiffon underskirts and bodice tops I can work in even comparatively short lengths of my velvet."

One sees the velvet dance frocks of which she spoke wherever modish clothes are shown, and they have the merit of being more substantial than the filmy little dance frocks of sheer stuffs which are more generally worn. Made like one sketched for this page, with underskirt and bodice of delicate yet strong silver lace over flesh color net, such a frock will stand a good deal even of the wear and tear entailed by modern dancing.

Appropos of evening frock materials the paillette robes are deserving of admiration and praise, and the dressmakers have picked them up with enthusiasm because they give a maximum of effect in an evening gown with a minimum of work. The same logic applies in the case of the woman who does not go to an expensive dressmaker. The robes are so nearly complete that not a great deal of expert making is required, and while the initial expense may be considerable one saves it in the making.

Some of these robes are too elaborate for quiet tastes, but there are others in which the paillettes appear only as narrow bordering bands or traceries on net or lace, with delicate and exquisite effect. The opalescent "fish scale" paillettes giving luminous mother-of-pearl color effects are particularly popular and deserve the popularity. A robe of fine cream net may have graduated bands of these opalescent paillettes so closely set as to form a solid line, and at intervals each band may be interrupted by a cluster of tiny flowers embroidered in crystal beads of delicate colors. Or gray opalescent paillette embroideries may be touched here and there by blossoms of soft coral, or black paillette bands may be interwoven with fine tracery of clear crystal.

Much of this fine line embroidery in crystal is used upon the net robes and bands and flouncings and frequently it follows a swathing vine design bearing little clustered fruits or blossoms of pearl and crystal beads. A good deal of net and crystal tracery in the fine line is seen, and sometimes paillettes form a third in such combinations. For example, a black net flouncing will have fine lines of net running vertically from the edge, while equally fine lines of crystal run horizontally in a flowing tracery, and occasionally a little motif of opalescent green paillettes enters into the design.

There are quantities of nets solidly sewn with paillettes and these are used very skillfully and artistically by the dressmakers, but the more delicate paillette effects on net flouncing, band and robe are more adaptable.

Metallic trimmings are not exceptionally strong this season, but exception is made in favor of silver lace, and there are of course the beautiful metallic brocades which are chiefly used for trimming evening coats and evening gowns of the staterail sort.

Enormous quantities of nets and net laces have been sold and some difficult ones are experienced in getting what one wants in these materials, since the supply has been curtailed and the demand has been so great. The deep coral and string coral nets and laces have come into prominence with the wave of enthusiasm over the sand and putty tones and many waists are now made up in these laces and nets instead of in the usual cream color.



Atty E Underwood

A red velvet coat edged with black fur and a taupe velvet gown embroidered with silver.

Since the fashion world was to be inundated by a color there was occasion for gratitude in the fact that the color is a neutral and inconspicuous one, but already one tires of the unending procession of sand color hats and putty color hats, sand color suits and putty color suits. Every millinery shop window is full of sand color velvet hats trimmed in brown fur. All the way from Grand

the reflection that such neutral shades, while having the beauty of refinement, are far from being generally becoming. Hair and complexion with little warmth of color are likely to sink into brown discoloration when brought into contact with putty or sand or fawn, though the dark brown fur which is so often associated with these colors at present does not lift the curse to a very considerable degree.

There are many shades in covert cloth and gabardine has a wide range of colors; so perhaps the fad for the severely tailored suit of the Tommy Atkins type, which has come to us in sand and putty colors out of compliment to service uniform neutrality, may be the entering wedge for the popularity of such models in other colors. Many women would be glad to have it so, and while the average model of the class just now has a very youthful air less extreme but equally chic models of similar genre are appearing daily, and upon women who do not lend their favor to passing fads.

The strictly tailored costume of which America was once the earnest sponsor and which American tailors turned out supremely well has for a good many years been allowed into the background by the semi-tailored costume which is the French version of the "tailored model" and women while subscribing meekly to the decree have missed their practical, trim "tailor models." The time seems propitious for a revival, and if the Tommy Atkins idea leads up to such a revival at least one good thing will have been brought about by the war.

For another thing is Tommy Atkins to be called blessed by students of fashion. He has put the ban upon the debonair slouch, which was the most absurd and unbecoming of recent fashion fads, and hump, hollow canted, slouchy young women are making earnest if not yet altogether successful efforts to raise their chests and flatten their shoulders and assume an air of natty alertness which, fad or no fad, is a welcome and beneficial change.

SEAWEED AND SHARK GOOD FOOD AT A PINCH.

THE late Thomas E. Murray, who brought much fame to the New York Ichthyophagous Club during its existence by his introduction of most palatable dishes at its feasts from unheard of sources

of edible things" said one who was a member of that unique club, "was at the time of his death engaged in compiling a book on 'Seaweed and Fish Resources,' a subject on which he was by investigation and practical experiment peculiarly fitted to give information in the economy of the household, and particularly at this time would it have made strong appeal."

"The list of plants in our fields, forests, swamps, streams, oceans, everywhere in short, that we customarily call weeds," Mr. Murray was wont to say, "but which are as nutritious and delicious as any of those we do know something about and cultivate, is immense. And almost everything that lives in water, salt or fresh, or upon the land or in the air, is good to eat. All that is necessary is to know how to cook each thing, animal or vegetable, and the courage to eat it after it is cooked."

"To show his faith in his belief and to demonstrate that even things regarded as deadly in their natural form could be made into a not only harmless but palatable dish Mr. Murray cooked and ate poison ivy. He boiled it thoroughly, draining the water on it three or four times. He served it the same as spinach, and after he had partaken of it freely pronounced it as subtle as good spinach and suffered no ill effects from it. The Ichthyophagous Club ventured to agree with its bold and confident chairman."

"While Mr. Murray did not have a brilliant or polished way by the ordinary cook or as a family preparation for the table he cited it as an example of what might be drawn from the ignored and avoided productions of the wild and waste places as palatable and nutritious food resources entirely neglected. 'But even if we leave out all to which suspicion may attach,' he said, 'the list of edible things popularly unknown will still be very large, and a knowledge of it, under certain by no means impracticable contingencies, might be of the highest importance in the domestic economy.' Such an emergency is perhaps here now, and it is to be regretted that Mr. Murray did not live to complete his work, or that there is no one of his knowledge, skill, courage and confidence in the subject to exploit it now for the public good."

"In his catering to the Ichthyophagous Club Mr. Murray demonstrated the great possibilities of sea weeds in providing unexpected delights in the vegetable line of edibles. He proved that although there were many kinds of these weeds they were all good to eat. The best was the commonest of them all, the Laminaria rock weed, familiar to everybody who is much about the coast; thimble of tons of it going to waste every year," Tom Murray used to say. That weed he prepared in many different ways, but the favorite was the selecting of the largest and tenderest fronds of the weed, thoroughly cleansing them in cold fresh water and boiling them as in spinach. Naturally of strenuous fibre, the weed was kept boiling steadily three or four hours. Sometimes a ham bone or an

onion, or both, was boiled with it to vary the flavor. A small quantity of bicarbonate of soda added while the pot was boiling removed all the sea rankness. The water was changed three or four times.

"When thoroughly boiled the weeds were squeezed free of water, chopped fine and set away to get cold. When wanted for serving, the mass was placed in a frying pan in which a lump of butter was melted, and brought to heat all through, well seasoned the while with salt and pepper. Served as a vegetable in the form of fried eggplant, or as filling for toast sandwiches, it was an agreeable surprise to the palate. It had a peculiar relishing flavor of its own. It was also a safe garnish for meats, and, seasoned for the purpose, became an excellent filling for mangoes, melons and peppers. From this weed Mr. Murray made also, by boiling the fronds half an hour and putting them through a course of brine and vinegar pickling, a pickle relish unexcelled for pungency and lasting flavor."

"In the way of fish unheard of on restaurant menus or for the family table Tom Murray utilized such incredible creatures as the shark, the starfish, the razor clam and the horseshoe crab. Most agreeable steaks he prepared and served from the blue shark. His boiled shark served cold with mayonnaise sauce, the diners being unaware of what it was, tickled the palate of the Ichthyophagous Club to great praise of it. Some said it was salmon, others were sure it was veal, but none guessed shark. Shark salad also made a hit."

"Murray had another way of preparing the shark that was full of pleasant surprises. Parboiling the shark, he gave it a four hour bath in oil, vinegar, pepper and salt. Draining it, he baked it in a covered pan with butter and bread crumbs. Then it was boiled a while, separated into bits, which were soaked in the oil bath again. Drained from that, it was mixed with hot sliced potatoes and plain salad dressing and set aside to cool. Served, it gave the Ichthyophagists something pleasant to talk about for days. 'In fact,' Murray said, 'the shark is good in many ways except fried. It is not good fried. The shark's relative, the dogfish, is good too in nearly all the ways the shark is!'"

"As for razor clams," he said, "they would be worth 50 cents apiece with ordinary clams at 25 cents a hundred if they were only scarce and people knew how good they are. The razor clam makes the best bisque one ever ate, with the exception of the starfish, which looks about as much like having edible quality as a crescent saw does. But it is a store-house of ingredients for a supreme bisque. Take your starfish, cut its fingers apart and bruise them in a mortar to a paste, having first soaked them all night in fresh water. Boil the paste, add soup stock and, in short, make it as any intelligent cook would make a bisque that he knew he was going to have every reason to be more than proud of and you will have the finest flavored thick soup in the world."

"There are people plenty who eat snails and prize them highly as a dainty morsel, yet who would look incredulous, and perhaps shocked, if angle worms were suggested to them as something good to eat. But Tom Murray made a toothsome dish out of them, and declared that so long as there were angle worms to be got no person need have fear of starving. The way he prepared for the Ichthyophagous Club this last thing in the world any one would think of as something good to eat was this: He placed his collection of angle worms in a fine sieve, and put the sieve in a pail, three inches from the bottom, then filled the pail with milk. Leaving them in that milk bath a couple of days, they got rid of their earthy flavor, and fattened on the milk to that extent that they looked as big as lead pencils, and were as white as snow."

"Removing them from their bath, he washed them in clean water, threw them on a board covered with flour, and let them wiggle around in it until they were thickly covered with it. Then he dropped them into a kettle of boiling fat. That killed them instantly, and crisped them to a turn. To serve them he placed them on a snowy napkin, garnished with parsley, and to be eaten with drawn butter containing a little lemon juice and a dash of Worcestershire sauce. At first the Ichthyophagists, even, were a little backward about accepting the daintily prepared and served angle worms, but once the



Black tulle and velvet.

blonze was made, none was left on the dish, and there was a call for more. "The hellbender, perhaps the most repulsive looking fish reptile that our latitude has among its fauna, Tom Murray made steaks from that some went so far as to pronounce even better than diamond back terrapin. But that was before they knew what the stew was made from. Even then they admitted that it was fit for the approving consideration of any epicure."



Rose velvet and silver lace.

street to Harlem it is the same thing and every second girl or woman one meets is wearing a hat in the popular color. Pretty as the mode is it has run its course too furiously to last, and the very fastidious woman, albeit with a sigh of regret, will now pass by the tempting sand color toque and the even more tempting sand color covert or gabardine tailored suit.

She may console herself perhaps with



Covert cloth.



Sand colored serge.